

PAYING THE PRICE “GENERAL STRIKE IS NOW”

Tips from an amateur organizer

The futility of feudalism

The “pain” of the tariffs will be “worth the price” says felonious 47th United States President Donald J. Trump. Though the tariffs against Canada and Mexico were at one point suspended (reported to be Tuesday March 4th, 2025), the 10% tariffs on China have always remained in place without hesitation. In retaliation, China has responded by passing this cost down to the already struggling majority classes in price inflation. For example: what would have cost \$20 may now cost \$27. Now there are talks of imposing 25% tariffs on all cars not fully manufactured in the United States. This means even domestic vehicles would increase in price immediately as many parts are de facto imported.

Furthermore, other nations have expressed leveling reciprocal tariffs, and South Africa has announced they will no longer be exporting any materials to the United States whatsoever. If you are unaware, this is a primary source of rare earth minerals and other such resources for the United States. To overcome this deduction president Trump has arrogantly pressured Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy during their February 28th, 2025 oval office meeting into signing a deal for their rare earth minerals in exchange for the United States support and protection from the Russian invasion that has been taking place over the last three years decimating the small sovereign nation, killing countless innocents.

Historically we have seen that capitalism intrinsically depends upon such procurement of resources and exploitation of the labour-class. Max Beer makes this overtly known in his book *The Life and Teaching of Karl Marx* when he details the following:

“The struggle for these sources of raw materials, and for access to them, leads to wars in which capital sums of unprecedented amounts are destroyed. Since 1894 these wars over raw materials and trade routes have broken out every few years.”

Additionally, other nations and governments have similarly expressed how there are other avenues

and opportunities to purchase like products from around the world, therefore it is not necessary to engage in international commerce with the United States. They are simply going to purchase their goods elsewhere. Yet we will be left with little choice to do otherwise as we do not have those same resources aplenty domestically.

However, more relevantly, what “pain” will the fiscally endowed — like Trump and Musk — feel from these economic shifts? The average US citizen will now spend \$600 more annually on basic, essential purchases such as clothing, food, and the like. The disenfranchised and labor classes often barely survive ‘paycheck to paycheck’; how can they consider the waiting struggles “worth the price”? Aren’t these tariffs supposed to reduce inflation and economic instability for this nation? Isn’t the goal to grow our jobs and home based business? It didn’t work before; why do we think it is going to work so well now without greater hardship?

Meanwhile, the elites will continue to live in luxury and think nothing of the annual increase that will likely displace and further impoverish families. There is no “pain” to be experienced by this top echelon of the financial bracket. Instead, they expect the labor class and working-person to slave harder to earn less!

“The average price of wage-labor is the minimum wage; that quantum of the means to sustenance, which is absolutely requisite to keep the laborer in bare existence as a laborer. Therefore, what the wage-laborer appropriates by means of this labor, merely suffices to prolong and reproduce bare existence.”

According to Max Beer, as seen by Karl Marx, what comes to be is: unbridgeable antagonisms... which lead to a class struggle. The antagonisms are primarily of an economic nature. The wage-earners, as the owners of labour power, are constrained to sell this as dear as possible... to obtain the highest possible wages, whereas the owners of capital endeavour to buy such labour-power as cheap as possible... to pay the least possible wages. This antagonism is in-

deed fundamental, but, at first sight, does not touch the intellectual sphere very deeply. On the surface, this antagonism is only one as between buyer and seller, but in reality the distinction is very great, as the seller of labour-power will quickly starve if he does not market his commodity. The owner of the means of production is therefore in a position to cause the seller of labour-power to starve, if the latter does not accept the conditions which the capitalist imposes. Ownership of capital reveals itself as a power that can oppress the owner of labour-power.

These governmental and corporate oppressors continue to enslave the masses by way of exploitation of essential necessities! However, the antithesis to this soon becomes clear.

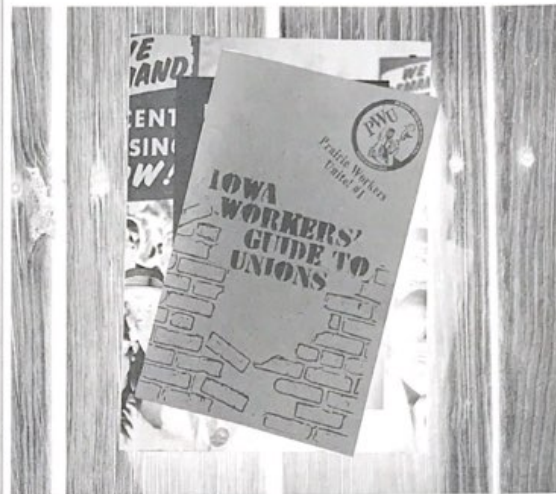
Karl Marx observes this in his Manifesto in addition to the aforementioned direct quote by stating:

“The modern laborer... [does not rise] with the progress of industry, [instead they] sink deeper below the conditions of existence on [their] class. [They] become paupers, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. Here it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society and to impose its condition on existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within its slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state that it has to feed him instead of being fed by him.”

How does this relate here in our current geo-political world and economic climate? These global price hikes and inadequate wages result in public assistance being sought at a higher rate putting a greater strain on the antagonistic party, economy, and society as a whole. The inability to be self-reliant and sustainable becomes a ‘waste’. Capitalism ultimately creates a counterproductive outcome in opposition to its own genuine ideological aspirations!

There is a deterioration in contribution to the masses and their growth; contrarily, many become miserly out of the fear of

FEUDALISM, cont’d on back



Iowa Workers' Guide to Unions by Prairie Workers United

General Strike Is Now (If You Want It). Economic Boycott: Don't Buy Stuff Feb 28 (No Amazon/Walmart; OK small business). Global Strike For Gaza Monday, Dec 11: no work, no school, no shopping #StrikeForGaza. OK, seriously: what are we doing here? I don't mean to discount the power of mass action. General strikes historically have won massive gains for workers. Trade unionists led history's greatest revolutions; for example, the Russian and Cuban revolutions were only maintained through general strikes that accompanied revolutionary armies taking power and prevented counter-revolutionary military coups. So what's the issue with these calls for general strike in the US? Why aren't they working? Because, honestly, these campaigns are not general strikes.

General strikes are organized by trade unions across sectors to increase their pressure on the capitalist class in ensuing negotiations. They are effective only because workers leverage their power by withholding the value that they create through their labor. The Instagram story infographic general strike

shares similarity only in calling for withholding of labor. They lack any leverage because of their disconnect from organized labor. If you and your friends call out sick on the same day, you will only frustrate your coworkers covering for you; to leverage any power, your coworkers covering you must also be absent alongside you!

So, how do you recruit your coworkers to your cause? For starters, by talking to them! A union at its most basic level is two or more workers taking collective action to improve their lives at work and improve the lives of workers in their industry. Start with coworkers you know well already and talk about concerns you have at work. Ask about their experiences at work, and listen! Ask about what at work they wish they could change: the low pay, the unilateral decision-making, the constant turnover. Suggest a way to change your workplace — through collective action, by forming a union.

Once at least one other coworker has joined you, you've established your “organizing committee”. This is the core group of workers dedicated to organizing a union. And as a committee,

you should start acting like a committee. Meet regularly, establish secure communications as a group, volunteer for tasks to flesh out your committee, and hold each other accountable.

Next comes your contact list, as any union must understand the members of its workplace. Programs like Google Sheets allow for collaboration between members of your OC. You'll need to collect names of your coworkers, how to contact them outside of official work channels, and an assessment of their support for the union on a scale of 1 (support) to 3 (oppose). Other information is also helpful, such as their job title, what shift they work, what languages they speak, or anything else.

Your list will allow you to keep track of your progress, especially as your OC continues to build out and talk to other coworkers about joining a union. Keep reaching out to workers and speak with them one-on-one. Ask them about their experiences, their struggles. Tie their issues with their workplace to collective action and forming a union. Even prior to anything official, this infrastructure will allow you to

UNIONS, cont'd on back

First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Personal Email	Assessment Lvl	Shift	Notes
John	Doe	319-439-6569	jdoe@gmail.com	1	Morning	
Jane	Demo		jdemo@gmail.com	2	Morning	
Ethel	Cain	515-755-0975	americanteen@protonmail.me	1	Night	
Luigi	Mangione			2	Night	
Rock	Andromy	319-466-7890	rockleick99@yahoo.com	2	Night	
Guillermo	Tedlow	515-648-0524		1	Morning	

Sample contact list for workers at the fictional Manifest Destiny Grocery Store

UNIONS, cont'd

advocate for your coworkers instead of letting the boss isolate and exploit each of you as individuals.

General Strike Is Now? It can be: don't call out sick, call in your coworkers! By establishing an OC and starting a list, you will have built the foundation for a union campaign. The only way we can fight fascism, white supremacy, and entrenched capitalism is by leveraging the power we have as a collective at the very chokepoints in the capitalist system we find ourselves in, whether that be a single store with half a dozen employees or the sprawling university. The general strikes and revolutions to come will require a unionized workforce, so get to work!

I'd like to thank Prairie Workers Unite! for their phenomenal *Iowa Workers' Guide To Unions* (2024), which is essential reading that can be found on Patreon and Instagram or by reaching out to prairie.workers.united@protonmail.com. The Iowa IWW is also a great resource for education and assistance in starting a union in the Iowa City area.

—CONRAD LEAH

FEUDALISM, cont'd

being unable to maintain self-preservation and feeding and protecting their loved ones from the impending jackals of routine costs and expenses as set by the capitalist economic structure. All suffer, but no more than those already taken advantage of by those hoarding private property.

These inherently anti-theoretical follies by the marginalizing antagonistic classes of the elite inevitably becomes their own undoing and downfall as it is an unsustainable model of production. Capitalism at its core is an unavoidably devolving self-consumption hidden behind the immediate result of surplus value (profit). In longevity this model fails to conclude with meaningful reliability.

This concept is presented by Max Beer in his book when he explains:

"Capital is the motive force of society and the creator of civilization, but the fruits of its activity are enjoyed not by the capital but by the landed nobility. ... The result of the entire working of capital for the civilized community is accordingly the reduction of profits, the depreciation of capital, and the increase of wages. This latter, however,

is of no advantage to the workers, for the food prices are higher and higher; on the contrary, the whole advantage falls to the landed nobility, who do nothing for the furtherance of civilization, but who, through ground rents and protective tariffs, receive everything."

In contrast, abolition of personal property through revolution and mutual aid would facilitate the harmonious utopian relations otherwise intended to be proffered and procured through the abused and overly inundated public assistance programs. Marx exemplifies this by his exertion in his Manifesto:

"Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labor, which property is alleged to be the grand work of all personal freedom, activity, and independence. Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! There is no need to abolish that..."

What is being professed here is that societal economic struggle is not an independent issue; rather, it is a national issue that requires compassion and compromise from all to ensure the needs and health of the nation. We cannot

ignore that oppressing others leads to the destruction of a nation itself! We are once again given this gem of philosophical wisdom from Marx's Manifesto when he further articulates:

"Thought not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is first a national struggle... Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen it, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed."

Therefore, as we have historically been witness to, class warfare between the oppressed and the oppressor has always given rise to revolution. Those vulnerable to such harm and forced into exploitation find themselves ushered toward making change for themselves and those similarly situated. Oftentimes there is no other choice than to take action for those seen as the minority; however, in this instance it is the majority who revolt for necessary change! Marx similarly witnessed this when he knowledgeably proclaimed:

"All previous historical movements were movement of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in

the interest of the immense majority."

We are likewise reminded of this notion of private property and conflict between the classes by Max Beer when he demonstrates the precarious relations between the owner and the owned by writing:

"In primitive societies, where private property is yet unknown, or still undeveloped, there are no class distinctions, no class domination, and no class antagonisms. ... But as soon as the old order is dissolved, and private property develops, in consequence of trade with other peoples or through wars, there arise classes of those who possess and those who do not. The possessing class carries on the Government, makes laws, and creates institutions, which chiefly serve the end of protecting the interests of the possessing and ruling classes. The intellectual structure of the class society likewise corresponds to the interest of those who possess and rule. So long as these interests promote the common good in some measure, so long as the old forms of production and the old conditions of production are largely in harmony with each other, a certain truce prevails between the classes. But should there set in the above-mentioned oppo-

sition between the productive forces and the conditions of production, the latter will cease to satisfy the oppressed classes, and class conflicts will arise, which with either result in legal compromise (reform) or will end in the overthrow of the society concerned, or will lead to a new set of conditions."

As the spring season of new beginnings and rebirth blossoms, you are encouraged to flourish in all efforts to surpass the simplicity of our current capitalist restraints and aspire for a more thorough unity in the freedoms of social justice and liberation from feudal oppression. We need not be subservient to a master that wishes to harm themselves due to a lack of compassion and desire for unified utopian health, wealth, and wellness. Forget not the Communist Maxim: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs."

—MISCHIEF MARX



Donations support homeless and housing insecure people in Iowa City and queer incarcerated people in Iowa. Consider a monthly donation to help sustain our work!

Poetry

HELP I

BY BOBBY MESSIER (PRAV)

They say death is only the beginning
Yet I wish for it, hoping for and ending
There's this feeling I can't describe
I can't get rid of it, run away or hide
The shit I've seen, been through, and faces
Makes me see this world, as a fucked up place
There's a hole inside of me I cannot fill
So I snort this powder, through this hundred-dollar bill
Sometimes I feel death is my only way out
But when I try, I just can't get it to come about
I'm tired of the pain, and hurt in my fucked up life
So I sit up at night, and play with my knife
My demons are way too many to fuck with
But what can I do my life's so fucked up it's a bitch
I can't decide what to do, whether I want to live or die
So I lay the knife down and begin to cry
Someone help me, I'm one sick pup
I can't believe my life is so fucked up
This is my cry for help, I guess you can say
So someone please help me, so I can live another day...



AUTONOMY
IOWA CITY

Supporting bodily autonomy,
right here in Iowa.

Assistance getting abortion pills for a
self-managed abortion or miscarriage

Assistance with out of state travel for
abortion related medical care

Support and education for people
choosing self-managed abortion

autonomyiowacity.org

Iowa's Income Tax Regression, 2022 - 2025

Iowa Income Tax Brackets *		Iowa Income Tax Rates			
Lower Limit	Upper Limit	TY 2022**	TY 2023	TY 2024	TY 2025
All Retirement Income		0.33% - 8.53%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
\$0	\$6,000	0.33% - 2.25%	4.40%	4.40%	3.90%
\$6,001	\$30,000	2.25% - 5.96%	4.82%	4.82%	3.90%
\$30,001	\$75,000	5.96% - 7.44%	5.70%	5.70%	3.90%
\$75,001	And over	7.44% - 8.53%	6.00%	5.70%	3.90%

*Brackets double for Married Filing Jointly. Brackets to be adjusted for inflation annually.

**TY 2022 had 8 progressive brackets. The above includes a range to simplify the table.

Winners in TY 2024 Iowa Income Tax Changes

Winning Iowans	2022 Rates	2024 Rates	Winnings from Tax Decrease
Work Income \$80,000	\$4,551	\$4,261	\$290
Retirement Income \$20,000	\$387	\$0	\$387
Work Income \$100,000	\$6,250	\$5,401	\$849
Retirement Income \$40,000	\$1,514	\$0	\$1,514
Retirement Income \$60,000	\$2,781	\$0	\$2,781
Retirement Income \$80,000	\$4,269	\$0	\$4,269
Retirement Income \$100,000	\$5,927	\$0	\$5,927
Work Income \$1,000,000	\$83,020	\$56,701	\$26,319
Retirement Income \$1,000,000	\$82,697	\$0	\$82,697

Estimates based on calculator at <https://tinyurl.com/iowa-income-tax-changes>

Losers in TY 2024 Iowa Income Tax Changes

Losing Iowans	2022 Rates	2024 Rates	Losses from Tax Increase
Work Income \$20,000	\$575	\$938	-\$363
Work Income \$40,000	\$1,748	\$1,981	-\$233
Work Income \$60,000	\$3,063	\$3,121	-\$58

Estimates based on calculator at <https://tinyurl.com/iowa-income-tax-changes>

It's tax season, and if you haven't been paying attention to Iowa's tax rate changes, you should be. Since 2022, rates for lower-income workers have gone up, while rates for higher-income workers have gone down. For the 2024 tax year, workers making under \$60,000 will face losses, while those making over that amount stand to gain.

Though the 2025 switch to a single 3.90% individual income tax rate might sound good at first, on paper it's clear any marginal improvement for low-income earners will be overshadowed by significant benefits to high-income earners.

The Trump administration boasts that since taking office, they have approved nearly \$12 billion in Foreign Military Sales to Israel. Before you file federally, consider **war tax resistance** to keep your tax dollars out of military spending. Learn more at nwtcc.org. Free Palestine!

**TRANS
PEOPLE ★
★ BELONG ★
IN IOWA ★
AND EVERYWHERE!**

